



American Contract  
Bridge League

# Unit 174 Newsletter July 2020



This month's newsletter includes the sections listed below. Click a link to jump to the corresponding section. If your browser does not support these links, scroll down to find a specific section.

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Please visit the Unit 174 Website ([www.acblunit174.org](http://www.acblunit174.org)) to view updated information about the activities in our Unit and at our Clubs.



## President's Message

I am a firm believer that bridge is the greatest card game ever invented. It is fascinating to learn and the learning process never stops. It is challenging, has a social element and is great fun!

Despite that, statistics show that there has been a 10% decline in the population of bridge players over the last five years.

In Unit 174 we would like to reverse that trend and I am asking for your help.



What can I do to help you ask? The first step is to communicate with prospective players:

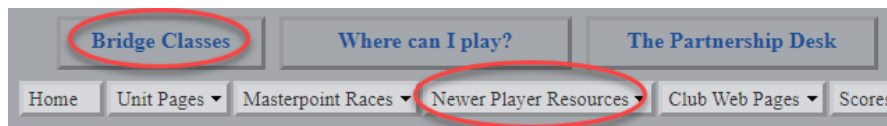
- ◆ Talking to friends and family
- ◆ Homeowner association newsletters
- ◆ Posting on social media such as Next door, Facebook ...
- ◆ Recruit duplicate players from social bridge

**NEW TO  
BRIDGE**



If asked by a new player how to start I have a couple of suggestions. At the ACBL home page there is a NEW TO BRIDGE button. Clicking it will take you to the [ACBL Learn page](#).

Unit 174 has a great website ([www.acblunit174.org](http://www.acblunit174.org)) with information on bridge classes and resources for new players.



Online bridge is essentially the only venue where we can play bridge as a group. As of July 1st, only half of Unit 174 is participating in online bridge games.

Another way to help is to reach out to your friends who have not played online, encourage them to join and offer to show them how to use BBO. Playing with a friend against robots while on the phone with them or using Zoom is an excellent way to make them feel comfortable with playing online.

Until next month, may you get more than your fair share of aces.

***Jack LaVigne, President, Unit 174***

[jacklavigne@att.net](mailto:jacklavigne@att.net)



## Board Business

A committee was formed to create a cohesive strategy on how to attract and retain new members. The committee is composed of:

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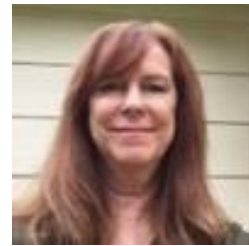
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Kathy McDougall  
[katmac432@hotmail.com](mailto:katmac432@hotmail.com)

## New Members and Rank Advancements

ACBL notifies us each month about the members new to our Unit and about those who advanced a rank as of the 6th day of the previous month. Below are listed those players who either joined our unit or advanced a rank.

### **NEW MEMBERS**

Please welcome the following players to our unit: Cindy B Bishop, David J Connan, Susan M Demarco, Paul Fatseas, James Graham, Art Jacikas, Marcie Jacikas, Rebecca McCutcheon, Ann B Muffeny, Riazuddin Shaikh, Donna A Stisher, Nancy Van Os

### **RANK ADVANCEMENTS**

Listed below are the new Unit 174 Masterpoint Milestones reported by ACBL for March, 2018. An explanation of ranks may be found at [www.acbl.org](http://www.acbl.org).

Junior Master (5 Masterpoints)

Judith S Barr, Kathleen C Hubbard, Ronell Kriel, Lynda Gay G Lawton, Edward Scott

Club Master (20 Masterpoints)

Amy Grossman, Abu R Hasan, Martha D McWilliams, Jaime M Moya, Candy Roach



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Sectional Master (50 Masterpoints)

Alannah Hallas, Lynn L Hershey, Douglas Kincannon, Kay G Watson

Regional Master (100 Masterpoints)

Michael W Abbott, Saundra Cook, Thomas Cook, Art Jacikas, John Magyari, Mary Vaughn

NABC Master (200 Masterpoints)

Betty M Cartmell, Linda K Drake, Sandra J Lehner, Bill Nash, Debbie L Nash, Rupa Shah, Joan B Slayden

**Bronze Life Master** (287 in Unit 174)

Helene Gersch, Joanne C Graham, David Littmann, Gregory May, Jeannie Stone

**Silver Life Master** (189 in Unit 174)

Patricia H Bunn, Syed R Naqvi, Robert M Shanley

**Ruby Life Master** (170 in Unit 174)

Steve C Levinson

**Gold Life Master** (100 in Unit 174)

David J Goldfarb

*Congratulations to all for these accomplishments!*

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## **174** Unit News

### **NORTH AMERICAN ONLINE BRIDGE CHAMPIONSHIPS**

The summer nationals that were to be played in Montreal have been cancelled. Hot off the press is the announcement of the North American Online Bridge Championships.



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There will be a KO that will be played in two parts: Thu–Sun, Jul 23–26 and Thu–Sun, Jul 30–Aug 2. There is also a special pair event on Aug 1–2. Both events award NABC titles.

Sales for the team event started on Jul 10. The event is open to the first 256 teams that register. [Click here for more information and to register.](#)

## ONLINE EXPERT TEAMS

On Sunday evenings at 7pm, our Houston local bridge pros and experts will be playing team matches on BBO. The partnerships change each week. Mark your calendar and plan on kibitzing these great matches. It's free so we hope you will plan on watching.

Players include: **Jimmy Breihan, Ira Chorush, Timucin Erkoc, Phillip Grothus, Buddy Hanby, Bob Morris, Dan Morse, Sally Wheeler and Eddie Wold.**

To find the game do a player search for BBO name **Mrace** or **Devilscoup**. Then click the JOIN button in the upper right corner of the profile.

## SILVER LININGS WEEK RETURNS

Alchemy Alert! During the week of July 27–August 2, ACBL will transform your BBO online points into DOUBLE SILVER POINTS. To earn these points, you need to do nothing more than play in your regular vClub games.

## LONGEST DAY(S)

Houston-area clubs did a terrific job raising almost \$15,000 for the Alzheimer's Association during the two days of Longest Day games. All U174 virtual clubs donated net game fees and several clubs raised more through fundraising sites and other activities. These monies are in addition to the estimated \$700,000 that will be donated by ACBL.

**Apple DBC** raised \$1100.

**Bridge Club of Houston (BCOH)** ran its annual Play with the Experts auction and raised about \$2500. Special thanks to the experts who have volunteered their time: **Julie Halperin, Buddy Hanby, Jeff Kroll, Daniel Jackson, Joe Quinn, Bill Riley and Sally Wheeler.**

The **Clear Lake/Galveston** virtual club (CLBC-GBC) raised \$3566.



**Star DBC, Pebble Creek DBC and Briarcrest DBC** pooled together and raised \$2300. This is particularly noteworthy as of it was raised via individual donations. These clubs do not have online games.

**Westside Bridge Academy (WBA)** raised about \$5377. **Lauri Laufman** made a special effort to reach out personally to players in conjunction with the WBA effort.

### **DRESS FOR SUCCESS**

Unit 174's 2020 charity is Dress for Success Houston (DFSH). For over 20 years, DFSH has provided business attire, job search skills and career advancement service to more than 44,000 women in the Houston area, including veterans.

The charity games were held for DFSH in March, but games scheduled for December have been canceled due to COVID-19. \$3,142 will be sent to DFSH; \$2,500 of that total was generously gifted by **Gerald Lott**, Compatible Components Corp.

**Nancy Strohmer**, Charity Coordinator expressed her thanks to all involved: "We are grateful to the clubs that participated, to Gerald Lott and to all of you who played in these games!"

### **NANCY STROHMER HONORED**



In addition to all her work for Unit 174, **Nancy Strohmer** is also the ACBL Charity Foundation President. Both she and the Foundation will be honored in August by the Greater Houston Women's Chamber of Commerce for supporting the advancement and empowerment of women and girls.

Read more about the Foundation and about Nancy's accomplishments on page 20 of the July *Bridge Bulletin*.



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## ♣ Club News

Below please find information reported to us by the clubs in our Unit. Please send your club's news to Jeff Kroll at [texas.blue.hen@gmail.com](mailto:texas.blue.hen@gmail.com). Information on all our clubs is available on the [Unit 174 website](#). Check there for the most up-to-date schedules, results and other news.

Houston area bridge clubs are currently closed, but several have an online presence (a "virtual club" or "vClub") on Bridge Base Online (BBO). You can support your club by playing on BBO ([www.bridgebase.com](http://www.bridgebase.com)). If you play at one of the Houston virtual clubs (see list below), a majority of the table fees go to that club and you get black (Club) points.

If your club does not have an online virtual club, ACBL is offering three special daily online pairs game where you can win black (Club) points -- at 9am, 4:10pm and 6:30pm (Central time). And the majority of your table fee will be returned to your local club. Look for the ACBL SYC games on BBO.

Houston vClub schedules are listed below.

### APPLE DBC

#### Regular schedule:

- ♦ Open Pairs                      Mon, Wed, Fri at 3:00pm
- ♦ Limited Pairs                    299r: Mon, Wed, Fri at 2:45pm

Silver Linings Week will be held Beginning July 27. Apple DBC will have both 299er and Open games Monday thru Friday that week. That's right 5 consecutive days so players can rack up the silver points.

BBO Search Term: **Apple**





## BRIDGE CLUB OF HOUSTON

### Regular schedule:

- ◆ Open Pairs                      Mon–Fri at 10:30am  
Sat, Sun at 12 noon  
Tue, Thu, Sat at 7:00pm
- ◆ Limited Pairs                    199r: Mon, Wed, Fri at 10:00am  
299r: Tue, Thu at 10:00am

July brings the return of the BCOH Mentor games on the third Monday of each month. Please contact **Bill Riley** ([ichibanbill@gmail.com](mailto:ichibanbill@gmail.com)) or **Roxie Walker** ([roxie\\_w@hotmail.com](mailto:roxie_w@hotmail.com)) if you would like to play in it.

BBO Search Term: **BCOH**

## CLEAR LAKE / GALVESTON

The Clear Lake and Galveston clubs have combined to form an online "virtual club".

### Regular Schedule

- ◆ Open Pairs                      Mon, Wed, Fri at 10:00am  
Sat 1:15pm
- ◆ Limited Pairs                    99r: Tue at 10:15am  
0-750: Tue at 10:30am  
499r: Thu at 10:15am

BBO Search Term: **CLBC-GBC**





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## WESTSIDE BRIDGE ACADEMY

### Regular Schedule

- ◆ Open Pairs                      Mon–Sat at 10:15am  
   Tue, Thu, Sat at 2:15pm; Sun at 1:15pm  
   Wed at 7:00pm
  
- ◆ Limited Pairs                    499r: Mon, Wed, Fri at 10:10am; Sun at 1:10pm  
   299r: Tue, Thu at 10:10am; Sat at 2:10pm

### Free Mini-Lesson

**Bert Onstott** gives a FREE 30-minute mini-lesson every Tuesday morning from 9:30-10:00 via Zoom. It's open to anyone, but geared to newer players. We will be continuing a series on "Card Play Technique" this week.

Bert sends out an email invitation every Tuesday morning; if you would like to participate, please send an email to [bertonstott@comcast.net](mailto:bertonstott@comcast.net) asking to be added to the invite list.

It will be over in plenty of time for you to play in the Tuesday morning 299r game.

### Mentor/Mentee Games

WBA holds Mentor/Mentee games twice a month on the second Wednesday morning at 10:15 and the fourth Tuesday evening at 7:00 pm. Both games last about two hours.

Mentees are those with less than 300 masterpoints, Mentors have over 300. If you would like to be included, let **Katherine Onstott** know (email [kjonstott@comcast.net](mailto:kjonstott@comcast.net)) and she will pair you with a suitable partner.

The entry fee is \$12 for the pair, which the Mentee is encouraged to pay.

For more information, visit <http://www.westsidebridgeacademy.com/Mentor-Mentee.php>.

BBO Search Term: **WBA**

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## From the Editors

We are excited to have the opportunity to send out the Unit 174 Newsletter. We have worked together for several years, identifying information that from the ACBL *Bridge Bulletin* that may be useful, especially to I/N players. The last two years of these monthly summaries are available here, on the WBA website.

### ***Bridge Bulletin* ARTICLE OF THE MONTH**

The July, 2020, article of the month is "Boehm on Bridge" by August Boehm on page 50. This piece is the fifth installment of Boehm's "Along the spectrum" series in which he discusses how to determine his "hand's value relative to other hands [he] might hold, consistent with [his] previous bidding." (*Bridge Bulletin*, March, 2020, p. 54)

In this situation you are South holding a two-point hand and partner has just made his third takeout double. Partner's first double shows about 11+; his second about 15+ and his third around 18+.

The auction, thus far:

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
			Pass
1♥	Dbl	2♥	Pass
Pass	Dbl	3♥	Pass
Pass	Dbl	Pass	?

Partner's hand probably looks something like this:

♠A K x x   ♥x   ♦A K x x   ♣K J 10 x

Your next action will be based on what your hand looks like and how you value it. Three possibilities include:

♠A 7 6 5   ♥9 8   ♦Q 5 4 3 2   ♣8 7 6

With this hand, you should be pleased to bid 4D. 4D might make. 3H doubled might make. It's cheap insurance to bid 4D. If 3H makes, your partner might be looking for a new partner after you fail to take out a takeout double.



♠ J 6   ♥ J 8 2   ♦ 5 4 3 2   ♣ 8 7 6 3

Here, you should pass and defend. You have little chance of making 4C or 4D unless partner has a monster hand. Since you are so flat, there is a good chance that enough of partner's high cards will cash and you will set the contract. There is also a chance that you'll get a spade ruff. Having three hearts cuts down the number of trumps East/West can have.

♠ 9 8 7 6 5   ♥ 9 8 2   ♦ 5   ♣ Q 8 7 6

Now you have hit the jackpot. The fifth spade is big, the three hearts means that partner has a singleton heart, you have second-round control of diamonds, and your club holding suggests that you have a fit with partner in both black suits. Bid 4S and expect to make it. Don't invite when you have enough to go to game.

### Other articles

Other articles that were considered:

- ♦ "The Bidding Box," Problem 1 (p. 30): This deal shows the need to show first- or second-round controls when investigating for slam. The *Bridge Bulletin* auction did a nice job. The contestants both got to a slam (one grand, one small) off two quick tricks.
- ♦ "The Real Deal" by Larry Cohen (p. 51) demonstrates how to plan carefully on a tight contract.



## DON'T LET THEM PLAY 2M

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
Pass	1♠	2♥	
2♠	Pass	Pass	3♥
3♠	Pass	Pass	Pass

**D** 9

**N Robot**  
 ♠1095  
 ♥974  
 ♦J852  
 ♣AJ10

**W Robot**  
 ♠KQ6  
 ♥53  
 ♦A76  
 ♣98762

**E Robot**  
 ♠AJ874  
 ♥KQ2  
 ♦1043  
 ♣Q3

**S texashen**  
 ♠32  
 ♥AJ1086  
 ♦KQ9  
 ♣K54

3♠ East  
 NS: 0  
 EW: 0

Letting the opponents play in a known eight-card major-suit fit (five spades for opener and three for responder) at the two-level is losing/low-percentage matchpoint play. Maybe my 3H bid will work out badly, but I have little to lose as we are likely to get a bad result if I pass. By bidding, any of these three good results could happen:

1. The contract could actually make.
2. The score for going down is better than the -110 if the opps make 2S.
3. The opponents could go to 3S and go down.

Option 3 is what actually did happen. I led a spade, as I did not want dummy to ruff a heart winner. Eventually we took: one heart, two diamonds and two clubs. Five tricks for down one.

Declarer played it well to hold it to down one. It played clubs right away. North used its only entry, the CA, to return a heart. Now we can never stop declarer from ruffing a heart - which it did.

A strong defensive player ducks the CA, letting me win with the CK and return my last trump. Now, if declarer plays clubs again, North wins the ace and removes dummy's last trump. If declarer plays hearts, I win with the ace, play a club to North's ace and North plays its last trump. Down two.

*Jeff Kroll & Sam Khayatt*  
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